



Australians can choose to have census data released in 100 years, Dec 1999

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The 2001 Census will offer the Australian people a choice of having their names, addresses and Census form information retained by the National Archives of Australia and released for research purposes after 99 years. This was announced today by Minister for Financial Services and Regulation, Joe Hockey.

The Government's decision was welcomed jointly by Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan, and Director-General of the National Archives of Australia, George Nichols.

Mr Nichols said that the 2001 Census has great significance, being the first of the new millennium and will coincide with the Centenary of Federation. The Government's decision will mean that the census information which people have elected to have retained will be available to genealogists, social historians and other researchers in the 22nd Century.

Mr McLennan stated the census will continue to provide a detailed statistical picture of Australia which will be vital to informed decision making in the future.

Names, addresses and census information will only be retained for those householders who explicitly "opt-in". These details will be retained by the National Archives of Australia and released in 99 years.

"A primary role of the Archives is to retain valuable Commonwealth records in a safe and secure environment, so these census records are guaranteed to remain confidential for the next 100 years," Mr Nichols said.

The high levels of cooperation with past censuses indicate that Australian people have always viewed it as very important for shaping the future of their country.

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